



---

## Rocky Mountain National Park News Release

August 4, 2005  
For Immediate Release  
David Eaker/Kyle Patterson 970-586-1363

### **New Clues May Aid Searchers in Locating Missing Park Ranger**

Search Area to be Narrowed Today

New clues received late yesterday may aid searchers in locating Rocky Mountain National Park Ranger Jeff Christensen, who was last seen by his co-workers at 11 a.m. at the Chapin Pass Trailhead off Old Fall River Road on Friday, July 29. Christensen was planning a backcountry patrol to the Lawn Lake Trailhead that evening. He did not contact park dispatch that evening and did not arrive for his shift on Saturday.

Yesterday, searchers received clues that may help to narrow the search area. During the late afternoon, park visitors reported hearing gun shots in the search area. There were also reports of smoke in the same general area. At approximately 8 P.M., park rangers responded to the reported location and stationed themselves at critical areas. One of them discharged their weapon (standard procedure in search operations) to elicit a response. Another ranger in a different location reported hearing a response shot a few minutes later. More rangers were then brought in to the area and spread out along road and trails to listen for more responses. No new gun shot responses were heard, but they did hear a radio being keyed after several gun shots from the rangers. At this time, there is no confirmation that the responses came from Christensen, but it does raise hope that it could possibly be him.

This morning, searchers will concentrate their efforts in this section of the search area, using ground crews, dog teams, and a helicopter equipped with a device that can help detect heat from a person. Today's weather is forecasted to be cloudy and rainy which will hamper helicopter operations at the higher elevations.

-more-

Additional crews are hiking into sections of the 26- square mile search area and will be camping in these places to lengthen their search day. The search area is in the Mummy Range which is a remote, high altitude, rugged area which includes Mount Chapin, Mount Chiquita, Ypsilon Mountain and Desolation Peaks. There are few designated trails in the area and hiking mainly occurs cross country.

Jeff is 31-years-old and is an experienced mountaineer. He is extremely fit and capable of covering long distances in a short period of time. Although Jeff was not intending to spend the night he had a backpack with a variety of gear. He also had a park radio with him, however, in some drainages radio coverage is spotty or his battery could have run out. This is his fourth season as a park ranger at Rocky Mountain National Park. Jeff is an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) and has worked ski patrol at Winter Park for the past seven years. His hometown is Fraser, Colorado.

Park officials are asking for help from anyone who may know of the above mentioned people or anyone else who might have seen Jeff in the Mummy Range area on Friday or Saturday to contact the park at **(970) 586-1204**.

-NPS-